

history of the known populations and their current status. Both books treat the genera *Dactylorhiza* and *Epipactis* in great detail and make every effort to sort out the species, subspecies, and varieties—no simple task! It is not surprising that the bibliography and glossary are similar in each work.

Given that both books cover much of the same information what does one book have that the other does not?

Foley and Clarke @ £45

covers 55 species
more extensive historical information
superior chapter on orchid taxonomy
checklist of species
authors names with the species
photographic hints
keys to the genera and species of selected genera
chapters by guest authors on cultivation and conservation

Harrap @ £29.99

covers 56 species
extensive specific information for seeking the orchids (44 page site guide to 330+ places to see orchids)
easier to read distribution maps
chart for each species showing decline over the years
convenient field guide format
growth pattern graphics of several genera
comparative plate of the bee orchids, *Ophrys*, of Europe

Both books use the term variety in the sense of forma—color and growth forms and both are guilty of the misuse of the term albino. A true albino plant has no coloring other than white-stems, leaves, and flowers. What is usually meant is white-flowered form often with the name *albiflora*. Although it is the only publication of the two with keys for identification, Foley and Clarke is by no means a field guide and the size limits its use as such. Having a copy of both books would be ideal. Use the Harraps in the field and then when returning home consult Foley and Clarke for confirming or additional information. The photographs in both books are excellent, but in Foley and Clarke many of the full-page images have blurred. I feel certain the original images were sharp but they were enlarged just a bit beyond their limits. The only noticeable errors I found in Foley and Clarke. The first, under *Spiranthes romanzoffiana* was simply information taken from an old source: that of *Spiranthes* {x}*steigeri* being a hybrid between *S. romanzoffiana* and *S. cernua*. It is not been viewed as such for over 25 years. *Spiranthes* {x}*steigeri* is a synonym for *S. ochroleuca*. Information under *Pseudorchis albida* stating that it occurs in North America from the east to Alaska is incorrect. The species, as *P. straminea*, is restricted to northwestern Newfoundland and a single site in western Quebec on the shore of Hudson's Bay. Both facts could have been easily found in *Flora of North America*.

Biographical information is given for both Foley and Clarke and their guest authors but none for the Harraps. It would have been nice to know a bit about them and their other work. All four primary authors should be congratulated on their work as these two books are a major contribution to the 21st Century's knowledge of wild orchid in the British Isles and are heartily recommended for both the novice and professional alike. If you are visiting the British Isles for an orchid hunting expedition the Anne and Simon Harraps' field guide will be especially useful.—Paul Martin Brown, author, *Wild Orchids of Florida*, *The Wild Orchids of North America*, *Wild Orchids of the Southeastern United States*, 10896 SW 90th Terrace, Ocala, FL 34481, U.S.A., naorchid@aol.com.

Orchids of Mexico

E. HÁGSATER, M.Á. SOTO ARENAS, G.A. SALAZAR CHÁVEZ, R. JIMÉNEZ MACHORRO, M.A. LÓPEZ ROSAS, and R.L. DRESSLER. 2005. **Orchids of Mexico**. (ISBN 9-6878-8908-X, hbk.). Published by Instituto Chinoín, A.C., Mexico City. Spanish and English versions available. (**Orders:** redactamex@yahoo.com.mx; Redacta, S.A. de

C.V., Avenida 10 de Mayo # 249, Col. San Pedro de los Pinos, C.P. 03800 Mexico, D.F. MEXICO). \$100.00, plus shipping, 304 pp., 650 color photographs, 13.25" \times 10" (33.5 \times 25.5 cm).

Initial disappointment may often give way to surprised delight. Such is the case of *Orchids of Mexico*. Given the publication and research history of the estimable authors I had expected a detail taxonomic treatment of the orchids of Mexico. Imagine my surprise when a large format-33.5 \times 25.5 cm-'coffee table' book arrived! This sumptuously illustrated volume is much more orchids 'in Mexico' than 'of Mexico' and wastes no time in luring the reader to that country. I soon discovered that the taxonomic treatment I was so looking forward to is forthcoming on a searchable CD that will cover the 164 genera and 1200+ species with over 1500 color photographs, a checklist, and cross-referenced synonymy. The current publication mentions 162 of those genera and 450 of the species.

But back to the volume at hand; sitting before me is one of the lushest books on orchids I have ever seen. Apart from the text, which we will get to later, it is lavishly illustrated with the highest quality photographs and color reproduction I have seen in many years and the printing on heavy stock only adds to the quality of the book. The authors have provided us with not just an overview of the orchids that grow within Mexico, but with details of the several climatic and geological regions of the country shown at first in a two-page layout of a satellite image of Mexico. After relating the history of orchids, and orchid research in Mexico, with many reproductions of plates from well-known historic volumes, it concludes with the ethobotanical history featuring *Vanilla planifolia*. A brief chapter on orchid biology is amply illustrated with photographs of plants from flower to fruit to flower with the many stages in between.

Now to our adventure searching the wilds of Mexico. As we visit the eight various habitats the narrative highlights the many species of orchids that are present and and numerous vies of the habitats and illustrates them with color photographs. At this point few synonyms are given and occasionally the reader may be temporarily confused with some of the newer generic concepts for familiar species such as *Prosthechea citrina* for *Cattleya citrina* and *Tamayorkis* for a few species traditionally known as *Malaxis*. Many species found in Mexico are also found in the bordering regions of the southwestern United States, Texas, and Florida. It is always welcome to see photographs of these more southerly species that may be very rare in the United States. Because of the arrangement of chapters by habitat it requires consulting the index to find information on specific species. But that is not the apparent aim of this book. It is to immerse the reader in the diversity of the orchids of Mexico and the verdant and prolific varied habitats. A final chapter on Conservation efforts and successes is followed by detailed photo creits and an extensive bibliography.

Thanks to the team of authors and photographers the text is scientifically accurate and this reviewer did not note any incorrectly labeled or positioned graphics (a feat not many books of this scope can boast!). There few typographical errors with a missing letter i.e., pseudobulb for pseudobulb, but nothing that could possibly distract from the intense text. Many photographers were credited in the book and the meticulous editing of these photographs has provided the finished book with a continuity not often seen in similar publications.

Is it expensive?—yes, at \$100—but worth every penny of the price. Keep in mind that two books were really written; one in Spanish and then one in English. Were *Orchids of Mexico* not sponsored by Chinoin I am sure it would have to sell for much more or not even have ever gone into production. If you have any interest in North American orchids, especially from the southern regions of that continent, do not pass up the opportunity to purchase this volume. And remember, that the interactive CD will soon be available to satisfy those of us who thrive on taxonomic treatments!—Paul Martin Brown, author, *Wild Orchids of Florida*, *The Wild Orchids of North America*, *Wild Orchids of the Southeastern United States*, 10896 SW 90th Terrace, Ocala, FL 34481, U.S.A., naorchid@aol.com.